



US Army Corps
of Engineers

Charleston District

District Dispatch

October, 1999 Vol. 1



Flood Fighting
Corps tries to keep Horry
County under control

Hurricane Floyd
District prepared for disaster

Corps New Home
Relocation expected for
October 2000

The Colonel's Corner



LTC Mark S. Held
Charleston District
District Engineer

During the past ninety days you could have thrown me out the window and I would not have hit the ground any harder.

Almost immediately after I assumed command we had a major dredging accident. This was my first opportunity to see how the district reacts during an emergency, and I knew I had a winning team when I saw the response. Everyone pulled together in a matter of minutes to overcome this terrible situation. We now have taken these lessons learned and developed a safety promotion venue for the entire dredging fleet.

Just as I was starting to catch my breath, Hurricane Dennis arrived. This was a good training exercise. The district pulled together and responded well. We were lucky to have a training exercise because this led into Hurricane Floyd, and Hurricane Floyd led into the flooding in Horry County. Through all of

Life Has Been Exciting in Charleston

these disasters we pulled together and accomplished our mission.

The district was willing to do whatever it took to get the job done. I feel very comfortable with the whole district team. I am very impressed by what I see, and I know we can move forward in a lot of things we want to do.

I guess it was only fitting that the day I took command the storm knocked the power out in The Citadel. I guess it was a first shot in the Hurricane season. Because of damage from Hurricane Floyd, we have been forced to move from our building. People not only had to go through the recovery missions for an emergency, but they had to work around not being able to get to their offices due to asbestos and water damage.

But the district team worked around that. People weren't cranky or irritable. They did what they had to do, and they kept their spirits up. This is a true sign of professionals and a great place to work.

This could not have happened at a worse time of the year. We were in

the process of year-end close out and working on our budget. But, I am happy to announce that we had a successful year-end close out, and we have a good, workable budget for next year. It will not cut into our ability to maintain our proficiencies, and yet at a G&A rate (overhead) of 39 percent it will give our customers a lot of value for their dollar.

When all of these things are thrown at you during a short time period, no one person is responsible for getting the job done. It takes everyone working together to accomplish these tasks.

This is what I've seen during my first 90 days as commander. If you could hit the ground running the way I have, you would see that we have a very capable and competent team. Hopefully, they can see in me that I am the kind of commander they want as a leader, not only for disasters, but also for the next two years.

District Welcomes Change



The traditional passing of the flags at the Change of Command Ceremony.

By: Jenny Shirley

Lt. Col. Mark S. Held assumed command of the Charleston District on July 16 at The Citadel's Mark Clark Hall. Former Commander and District Engineer, Lt. Col. Robert Rowlette, relinquished command to Held during the traditional passing of the Corps flag.

The passing of the flag symbolizes the changes within the Corps through the years. This tradition was once a ritual involving only military personnel, but now it begins with a civilian handing off the flag.

Deputy District Engineer for Project Management Carl Betterton began the command change. Lt. Col. Robert

Rowlette, passed it to South Atlantic Division Commander Brig. Gen. J. Richard Capka. Capka completed the traditional exchange by passing it to Lt. Col. Held.

Lt. Col. Held has served with the Corps of Engineers in Mobile, Ala, and Louisville,

Ky, as Project Manager and Operations Officer. He is the former force engineer for the Multi-national Force and Observers, a peacekeeping operation in Sinai, Egypt.

To an audience full of family, friends and District Staff Members, Lt. Col. Held expressed his delight to

be stationed in Charleston. "This has been a lifetime goal professionally for me," he said.

Lt. Col. Held said he plans to keep the Charleston District growing as a team. "I plan to take the great things already working in Charleston and build on them," he said.

Earlier, Lt. Col. Rowlette was applauded for his many accomplishments. He received letters of appreciation from government officials for his two-year tour. Lt. Col. Rowlette said contracts have been awarded for the deepening and widening of the Charleston Harbor.

Lt. Col. Rowlette was praised for his relief efforts in Puerto Rico during Hurricane Georges. He headed a mission that delivered 18 million pounds of ice to the area after it was destroyed by the hurricane.

Lt. Col. Rowlette is now serving as the Colonel Assignments Officer, Engineer Branch in Washington, DC.



Lt. Col. Held addresses the audience as the new Commander and District Engineer.

District to Get New Home in 2000



A digital image of the Charleston District's new look.

By: Jenny Shirley

The L. Mendel Rivers Federal building is on its last leg, and the Charleston District must find a new home. The deteriorating building has put corps employees out of operation several times this year.

Plans have been underway for several years to move the Corps, and General Services Administration has finally awarded the lease for our new Charleston District Headquarters Facility. The selected site is at 69 Hagood Ave. near The Citadel.

Unlike the Federal Building, the new building will house only the Corps. The Corps will lease this building through The Citadel Alumni Association for a term of ten years. The new district office will be an L - shaped building, with a façade shaped like a castle. The site will

contain approximately 160 parking spaces at no additional cost.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held at the site on Sept. 1. Guest speakers included; The Citadel Alumni Association President, Col. J. Quincy Jr., USAF (Ret.); The Citadel President, Maj. Gen. John S. Grinalds, USMC (Ret.); City of Charleston Mayor, Joseph P. Riley, Jr.; and our very own Lt. Col. Mark S. Held.

Mayor Riley has strongly supported the relocation of the Corps to the Citadel. He believes that government agencies should stay within the city limits they will be serving. He stated, "This move will only strengthen the continuous partnership between the Corps and The Citadel." Mayor Riley believes this may be history in the making.

Lt. Col. Held has promised to make the relocation project one of his top priorities. "The Charleston District deserves a good home, and we are moving in that direction," said Held. He also plans to begin a co-op program with the Citadel.

According to the current schedule, the move in date will be October 2000.



Hurricane Floyd: Charleston District Ready for Disaster

By: Jenny Shirley

Hurricane Floyd was predicted to be the most dangerous natural disaster to hit the coast of South Carolina since Hurricane Hugo. As the storm passed Charleston, the city received minimal damage.

But the Charleston District's Headquarters, L. Mendel Rivers Federal Building, received severe structural damage to the roof and subsequent water damage. Emergency Deployable Tactical Operation Centers were set up outside the federal building to house the employees.

Luckily, Floyd only grazed the coast of South Carolina and then headed up the eastern seaboard.

As the storm traveled



Charleston County EOC.

north, USACE moved into areas behind the storm to begin preliminary damage assessment, distribution of ice and water, provide emergency power and initiate recovery operations. The South Atlantic Division coordinated relief efforts from Florida through North Carolina, and the North Atlantic Division coordinated relief efforts from Virginia through New England.

USACE worked with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on a \$2.5 million emergency preparation and recovery mission assignment. These missions included activating and deploying teams to purchase and distribute 300,000

pounds of ice.

The Charleston District is home to one of seven Ice Planning and Response Teams (PRT) in the country. The PRT has

planned and trained for natural disasters such as Hurricane Floyd. Charleston was chosen to carry out these duties because of their previous experience with ice missions.

They were called upon for the Florida fires, Hurricane Bonnie, and Hurricane Georges. Team members include David Harris and Marlene Judy, Action Officers, Gary McAlister and Keith Elmers, Mission Coordinators, Jerry McSwain, Jake Duncan and Amy Henke, Mission

See Floyd on page 7



Employees at work inside the DTOC.



Emergency deployable tactical operations centers located outside the Charleston Federal Building.

Flood Fighting: Corps Trys To



Flooding at sewage plant.

By: Jenny Shirley

As Hurricane Floyd passed over land and was downgraded into a tropical storm, the rainfall in the Carolinas and up the eastern seaboard created record flooding in rivers throughout the region. USACE responded under both it's own flood-fighting authority, and to missions assigned by FEMA.

By Sept. 20, Charleston and Wilmington districts had provided flood plane mapping and thousands of sandbags and sandbagging machines to local authorities to assist them in protecting important infrastructure. USACE personnel were dispatched to Horry County, S.C., and to 15 County Emergency Operation Centers in flood-affected areas of North Carolina.

In Conway, S.C., the Waccamaw River rose toward a record crest and teams from

Charleston and throughout the Corps worked feverishly to protect local sewage treatment, water, and power facilities using sandbags and pumps.

The Waccamaw is an old river, slow to drain because of choked bends, meanders and switchbacks. Since the river is rarely used for commercial purposes anymore, it is clogged with trees.

In the Conway Sewer System, emergency dikes were

constructed by USACE to protect 11 pumps endangered of flooding. Each pump station was sandbagged in order to help keep flood waters out.

More than 600,000 sandbags were placed in Horry County to help keep flood waters away from homes and businesses. Residents had to make dozens of trips, often by boat or in waders, to slowly move possessions out of their homes.

The water was so deep along some sections of S.C. Highway 905 that it flowed through the windows of National Guard Humvees traveling the road on rescue missions. At least one guardsman refused to make trips in the vehicle because he worried about water moccasins slithering into the vehicle.

Floodwaters in South



National Guard loading sandbags provided by the Corps.

Keep Horry County Under Control

Carolina did not become a public health threat as they did in North Carolina. There the flood plain was a cesspool of 18,000 square miles, swirling with bacteria, spilled chemicals, pesticides and gasoline. Contamination from dead livestock dissipated locally and did not drain into the Waccamaw.

One problem that has hit both the Carolinas is a massive mosquito hatching caused by the flooding. Approximately 400,000 acres will have to be aerially sprayed.

As the floodwaters receded, USACE began their Debris Removal Mission. On Oct. 6, an inspection tower and a household hazardous toxic waste (HHTW) containment area were set up at the Horry County Landfill.

Resident Engineer, Kevin Widner, directed debris removal to begin on Oct. 7. The plan includes collection passes through flood affected areas of Horry County.

The Debris Removal Mission will also collect the flood fighting berms and sandbags in the city of Conway when they are no longer needed.



Charleston District Corps Team Members work at Conway Emergency Operations Center.

Floyd cont.

Managers, Saulo Gaspi and Fred South, Logistics Specialists, and Bob Driscoll and Bill Mills, Contractors.

Charleston's PRT helped distribute 100,000 pounds of ice to Dobbins Air Force Base, near Atlanta, Ga., and 200,000 pounds of ice to Shaw Air Force Base, near Columbia, S.C. North Carolina received most of this ice due to massive power outages.

USACE supplied 200,000 gallons of drinking water a day to Portsmouth, Va. because Hurricane Floyd damaged the city's water treatment plant. USACE worked closely with the Virginia Army National Guard to ensure proper distribution of the water. The \$5 million FEMA-directed mission was for a minimum of four days.

USACE performed debris and structural damage assessments along the path of Hurricane Floyd. They assisted federal, state and local officials in opening key routes, clearing roads and protecting homes and businesses.

USACE has a primary disaster preparedness and response role as part of the Federal Response Plan (FRP) administered by FEMA. The FRP describes how the federal government assists states and territories to cope with specific disasters. Under the plan, USACE is the primary Department of Defense organization for planning, preparedness and response under Public Works and Engineering.

PUMPKIN CARVING TIPS FOR THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

It wouldn't be Halloween without a scary pumpkin on the door-step to greet those ghosts and goblins. My favorite part of Halloween is pumpkin carving. I get sick of candy, tired of horror movies-but I absolutely love digging the guts out of pumpkins and carving them into interesting creatures.

I think people should be prosecuted for pumpkin smashing. Jack-o-lanterns are a cheap, fun way to decorate for the holiday, and you can also use the insides for various pumpkin recipes or toast the pumpkin seeds.

It's the best way to use your creative energy for the holiday, or just the best way to use the energy from all that candy. This Halloween, get creative with your pumpkins. Try and find the character of each pumpkin's shape and give it a face that suits it. If it is lumpy and deformed, make it scary. If it is a tall, droopy-shaped pumpkin, give it a doopy face.

You'll need two or so large, sharp knives; a small, sturdy knife for detailing; an ice cream scoop or another metal spoon to scoop out the insides; and somewhere to put the guts and seeds of the pumpkin.

I've gathered some helpful information from the homearts.com Web site to compile an easy how-to list for pumpkin carving. So pick out a pumpkin, sharpen your knives and get started.

- Draw some ideas for your pumpkin's face on a sheet of paper. Once you've found one you like, use a ballpoint pen to mark the design on your pumpkin.
- Cut a star-shaped lid from the top, tapering the lid so that it is wider on the rind edge than on the inside -- this helps to keep the lid from

falling in if it shrinks.

- Scoop out seeds and fibers from the inside of the pumpkin and under the lid. Save seeds for toasting later.
- Carve carefully around your sketched design, taking extra caution around curves and small, detailed areas. You can even use cookie cutters to press imprints into the pumpkin and use as a base for cutting.
- Taper around the edges whenever possible. Clean all the loose pieces out and cut a small ventilation hole.

- Place a short, fat candle (tea lights work well) inside. Place in a prominent spot in a window or on your porch for the neighbors to envy.

Pumpkins can be placed in wire hanging baskets to avoid those pesky pumpkin smashers.

To make toasted pumpkin seeds:

1. Rinse pumpkin-seeds under water and remove all the membrane fibers.
2. Blot seeds with a paper towel. If you are patient enough, spread them out to dry for 2-3 hours. If not, skip this step.
3. Toss with a tablespoon of olive or vegetable oil, and place in a single layer on a baking sheet.
4. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes until golden brown, stirring occasionally.
5. To add flavor, try soaking the seeds in salt water for several hours, or sprinkle with salt and pepper while roasting. If you like spicy foods, sprinkle a healthy dusting of Creole seasoning or chili powder on the seeds. Grated Parmesan cheese is another excellent seasoning.



Safety Matters...

Even In An Office

Your ordinary office routine may seem safe enough. You probably take the elevator or stairs, use the coffee maker, open and close drawers, and lift stacks of files comfortably and easily every day. Although all of these daily office activities may be second nature to you, they can be more dangerous than you might think -- especially because you and your co-workers don't expect problems. Learn to look with new eyes for these common safety hazards in your office.

Falls are the most common office accidents. They happen while people are walking, climbing stairs, even leaning back in chairs. Keep an eye out for telephone extension and electrical cords, and open drawers, which can cause people to trip. Loose or worn carpeting, slippery floors or packages left sitting in aisles can send even the most sure-footed for a nasty tumble. Correct these hazards when you can, and when you can't, point them out to others to prevent accidents.

File cabinets are a primary source of office injuries. Top-heavy drawers can cause a cabinet to topple over. Sharp corners of metal file cabinets can cause injuries. Drawers can pinch fingers if slammed shut. Open only one drawer at a time, and close drawers slowly and carefully. Office avalanches occur when too many boxes, papers or other materials are stacked too high for safety. All it takes is someone to pull

out something from halfway down the stack to send everything tumbling down. Keep papers inside cabinets -- not on top of them.

Electrical shock can result from frayed wiring, improper grounding or malfunctioning equipment. Check equipment and plugs regularly. All offices should have a three-wire grounding system.

Fires can occur anytime. Smoking is a common cause; so is electrical equipment. Look for people lighting up in no-smoking areas, or throwing matches or still-lit cigarettes on the floor or in wastebaskets. Flammable materials that are too close to coffee makers, space heaters or hot plates are also dangerous; keep them at least 18 inches away.

Lifting loads improperly can lead to strains and other back injuries. Twisting or jerking while lifting can also

cause injury. No one should try to lift a heavy or awkward load alone.

Repetitive motions, such as those involved in typing, can cause injuries to the hands and arms. Anyone working on a keyboard should be trained in proper hand position and should take breaks to exercise and stretch hands and arms.



In the Know...

From Printing Press to Internet

Enjoy your hand held, paperback District Dispatch while it lasts. Plans are in the making to circulate the Dispatch on the web.

The old fashioned printing press has seen it's better days, and with technology on the rise, the convenience of the Internet is a plus. Because the Internet is becoming a part of our daily lives, suggestions have been made to make the transition.

Many newspapers and other written publications have already made their way to the web. With the click of a button you can access papers such as the Washington Post, The New



York Times, and even our very own Post and Courier.

You environmentalists will love saving the trees, but those of you who fear technology, look out. To access the digital version of the Dispatch

just log onto the Charleston District's homepage at www.sac.usace.army.mil.

This digital version will be sent to all districts by e-mail. The previous issue is already up and running, so try it out and let us know what you think. Comments and suggestions can be sent to jshirley@usace.army.mil or call the Public Affairs Office at 727-4201.



Marlene Judy and Lisa Metheney work in the Emergency Operations Center in Conway.



Due to Hurricane Floyd, Charlie Harbin's office has been relocated to room 205.

District Folks...

Congratulations to:

Jim Whiteman of the Planning Branch, who was promoted to the position of GS-12 Plan Formulator on Oct. 10.

Welcome to:

Patricia Baremore who joined the Civilian Personnel Office as a Personnel Officer on July 18.

James Brannon who joined the Design and Construction Branch as a Construction Representative on Sept. 12.

Tammye Davis who joined the Design and Construction Branch as an Engineer Student Trainee on Aug. 18.

Paul Hinchcliff who joined the Regulatory Branch as a Biologist on July 19.

Lisa Matheney who joined the Planning Branch as an Economist on July 4.

Leslie Parker who joined the Regulatory Branch as a Biologist on Aug. 2.

Doug Marcy who joined the Hydrology, Hydraulics and Coastal Team as a Hydraulic Engineer on Oct. 4.



Col. Held calls a townhall meeting to get the district prepared for Hurricane Floyd.



Jake Duncan and Luke Lewkow work out of the DTOC following Hurricane Floyd

Sympathies to:

Derald McMillan of the Emergency Management Office, whose wife, Donna McMillan, passed away on Sept. 17.

Francis Limbaker of the Project Management Branch on the death of his daughter, Kim Limbaker, on Sept. 30.

Hispanic Hertiage Month



The U.S. Census Bureau reports that Hispanics now make up roughly 10 percent of the U.S. population and are the fastest growing segment in the country.

Helping Us Help Others



I love to do,” said Scott. “If I could, I’d work myself out of a job.”

Scott says the main reason problems arise in the workplace is because people do not take the time to listen to one

hobbies. She is a federal mediator, and has held numerous workshops since 1987. Some day she hopes to have her own mediation business.

Scott tries to make people aware of the diversity in our organization, by valuing the differences of others.

Scott has 22 years of federal service. Before she came to Charleston she worked for Fort Knox Ky., Fort Gordon, Ga. and Louisville, Ky. Scott received her Bachelors degree and Masters in education at the University of Louisville in Kentucky.

Scott has been married to her husband, James, for 20 years. They have 4 children; Cynthia, LaToya, Jamilah; and JJ.

Scott began working for the Charleston District on June 20. Welcome aboard Shirley!

By: Jenny Shirley

What started out as volunteer work became a life-long occupation for Shirley Scott. Her career as an Equal Employment Officer began when she was only a counselor for the EEO office at Fort Knox.

As a counselor, many people came to her with their problems because they assumed she was an EEO officer. She often helped people solve their problems before they even made it in the door of the EEO office.

“Helping people is what

“If I could,
I’d work
myself out
of a job”

another. Miscommunication between employees is sure to cause problems.

Even in her free time Scott is helping people communicate better with each other. Mediation is one of her main

The District Dispatch is an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-81. It is published quarterly by the Charleston District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It has a distribution of 400. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Articles and ideas for possible inclusion may be submitted to the Charleston District Public Affairs Office at P.O. Box 919, Charleston, SC 29402-0919. Phone (843) 727-4201.

District Engineer.....Lt. Col. Mark S. Held

Public Affairs Chief.....David A. Rich

Editor, Writer, Layout.....Jenny Shirley